

provided by the individual or the individual's family, information used by the Social Security Administration, and determinations made by officials of other agencies; and

(2) To the extent existing data do not describe the current functioning of the individual or are unavailable, insufficient, or inappropriate to make an eligibility determination, an assessment of additional data resulting from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, including assistive technology devices and services and worksite assessments, that are necessary to determine whether an individual is eligible.

(d) *Extended evaluation for individuals with severe disabilities.* (1) Prior to any determination that an individual with a severe disability is incapable of benefiting from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome because of the severity of that individual's disability, the State unit shall conduct an extended evaluation to determine whether or not there is clear and convincing evidence to support such a determination.

(2) During the extended evaluation period, which may not exceed 18 months, vocational rehabilitation services must be provided in the most integrated setting possible, consistent with the informed choice of the individual.

(3) During the extended evaluation period, the State unit shall develop a written plan for determining eligibility and for determining the nature and scope of services required to achieve an employment outcome. The State unit may provide during this period only those services that are necessary to make these two determinations.

(4) The State unit shall assess the individual's progress as frequently as necessary, but at least once every 90 days, during the extended evaluation period.

(5) The State unit shall terminate extended evaluation services at any point during the 18-month extended evaluation period if the State unit determines that—

(i) There is sufficient evidence to conclude that the individual can benefit from the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome; or

(ii) There is clear and convincing evidence that the individual is incapable of benefiting from vocational rehabilitation services in terms of an employment outcome.

(e) *Data for determination of priority for services under an order of selection.* If the State unit is operating under an order of selection for services, as provided in §361.36, the State unit shall base its priority assignments on—

(1) A review of the data that was developed under paragraphs (c) and (d) of this section to make the eligibility determination; and

(2) An assessment of additional data, to the extent necessary.

(Authority: Secs. 7(22)(A)(ii), 7(22)(C)(iii), 101(a)(9)(A), 101(a)(14), 101(a)(31), 102(a)(1), 102(a)(2), 102(a)(3), 102(a)(4), 103(a)(4), and 103(a)(6) of the Act; 29 U.S.C. 706(22)(A)(ii), 706(22)(C)(iii), 721(a)(9)(a), 721(a)(14), 721(a)(31), 722(a)(1), 722(a)(2), 722(a)(3), 722(a)(4), 723(a)(4), and 723(a)(6))

NOTE: *Clear and convincing evidence* means that the designated State unit shall have a high degree of certainty before it can conclude that an individual is incapable of benefiting from services in terms of an employment outcome. The "clear and convincing" standard constitutes the highest standard used in our civil system of law and is to be individually applied on a case-by-case basis. The term *clear* means unequivocal. Given these requirements, a review of existing information generally would not provide clear and convincing evidence. For example, the use of an intelligence test result alone would not constitute clear and convincing evidence. Clear and convincing evidence might include a description of assessments, including situational assessments and supported employment assessments, from service providers who have concluded that they would be unable to meet the individual's needs due to the severity of the individual's disability. The demonstration of "clear and convincing evidence" must include, if appropriate, a functional assessment of skill development activities, with any necessary supports (including assistive technology), in real life settings. (S. Rep. No. 357, 102d Cong., 2d. Sess. 37-38 (1992))

§361.43 Procedures for ineligibility determination.

The State plan must assure that if the State unit determines that an applicant is ineligible for vocational rehabilitation services or determines that an individual receiving services

under an individualized written rehabilitation program is no longer eligible for services, the State unit shall—

(a) Make the determination only after providing an opportunity for full consultation with the individual or, as appropriate, with the individual's representative;

(b) Inform the individual in writing, supplemented as necessary by other appropriate modes of communication consistent with the informed choice of the individual, of the ineligibility determination, including the reasons for that determination, the requirements under this section, and the means by which the individual may express and seek remedy for any dissatisfaction, including the procedures for review of a determination by the rehabilitation counselor or coordinator in accordance with § 361.57;

(c) Provide the individual with a description of services available from a client assistance program established under 34 CFR part 370 and information on how to contact that program; and

(d) Review within 12 months and annually thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, by the individual's representative any ineligibility determination that is based on a finding that the individual is incapable of achieving an employment outcome. This review need not be conducted in situations in which the individual has refused it, the individual is no longer present in the State, the individual's whereabouts are unknown, or the individual's medical condition is rapidly progressive or terminal.

(Authority: Secs. 101(a)(9)(D), 102(a)(6), and 102(c) of the Act; 29 U.S.C. 721(a)(9), 722(a)(6), and 722(c))

§ 361.44 Closure without eligibility determination.

The State plan must assure that the State unit may not close an applicant's record of services prior to making an eligibility determination unless the applicant declines to participate in, or is unavailable to complete an assessment for determining eligibility and priority for services, and the State unit has made a reasonable number of attempts to contact the applicant or, if appropriate, the applicant's representative

to encourage the applicant's participation.

(Authority: Secs. 12(c) and 101(a)(6)(A) of the Act; 29 U.S.C. 711(c) and 721(a)(6))

§ 361.45 Development of the individualized written rehabilitation program.

(a) *Purpose.* The State plan must assure that the State unit conducts an assessment for determining vocational rehabilitation needs for each eligible individual or, if the State is operating under an order of selection, for each eligible individual to whom the State is able to provide services. The purpose of this assessment is to determine the long-term vocational goal, intermediate rehabilitation objectives, and the nature and scope of vocational rehabilitation services to be included in the IWRP, which must be designed to achieve an employment outcome that is consistent with the individual's unique strengths, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, career interests, and informed choice.

(b) *Procedural requirements.* The State plan must assure that—

(1) The IWRP is developed jointly, agreed to, and signed by the vocational rehabilitation counselor or coordinator and the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative within the framework of a counseling and guidance relationship;

(2) The State unit has established and implemented standards for the prompt development of IWRPs for the individuals identified under paragraph (a) of this section, including timelines that take into consideration the needs of the individual;

(3) The State unit advises each individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative of all State unit procedures and requirements affecting the development and review of an IWRP, including the availability of appropriate modes of communication;

(4) In developing an IWRP for a student with a disability who is receiving special education services, the State unit considers the student's individualized education program;

(5) The State unit reviews the IWRP with the individual or, as appropriate, the individual's representative as often as necessary, but at least once each